

To the Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate bill 459 without my signature.

This bill is intended to make it easier for the state, under the authority of the State Lands Commission (Commission), to remove abandoned and other illegally placed vessels and watercraft when they pose a safety or environmental hazard.

I recognize that, to the extent that unattended and abandoned property can be removed from public lands and waterways more quickly, state and local agencies could experience potentially significant savings in court costs and environmental cleanup costs. However, there are also potentially significant costs that the state would incur under this bill since it would enhance the Commission's ability to remove and dispose of abandoned vessels. These implementation costs cannot be overlooked, especially given the state's current fiscal condition and the fact that no source of funding is identified in this bill.

The Department of Boating and Waterways currently administers the Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Program, which is funded annually through a legislative appropriation from the Harbors and Watercraft Revolving Fund and which provides grants to local public agencies with jurisdiction over navigable waterways in California and meeting specified criteria, including a 10 percent funding match, for the removal of abandoned vessels and navigational hazards. As such, this program has an identifiable funding source, as well as built-in state cost containments through the annual budgetary process and the prerequisite local funding match.

For these reasons, I am unable to sign this bill.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger